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Republicans join together to fight for Michigan jobs

Lansing – Senate Majority Leader Ken Sikkema (R-Wyoming) today announced an unprecedented proposal to provide much-needed job opportunities for Michigan residents.

Sen. Tony Stamas (R-Midland) said the proposal would help create manufacturing jobs, spur new small-business investment for more job opportunities and provide incentives to expand the state's slow-moving economy by getting Michigan residents back to work.

"Michigan has lost too many jobs," Stamas said. "It's time we starting fighting to keep jobs in our state. We need to make retention and job growth a priority and we have to take action now."

The plan would:

- Create Tool & Die Recovery Zones to provide tax relief similar to Renaissance Zones.
- Provide tax incentives for small start-up businesses by exempting them from most taxes for the first two years of operation then phasing in tax liabilities for the following four years.
- Reauthorize, strengthen and provide more accountability for the Michigan Economic Growth Authority, which expires on Dec. 31. MEGA is the state's main tax-incentive granting authority used to spur economic development.

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- Create a venture capital investment incentive by offering income and Single Business Tax breaks to those who might lose money investing in Michigan start-up businesses.
- Establish a Clean Michigan Initiative revolving loan program to clean up abandoned brownfield sites. This program would transfer the remaining CMI funding into a grant and loan program.
- Improve Michigan's infrastructure by expediting the 2002 voter approved Sewer Bond Initiative to allow communities to start construction projects sooner.
- Call on the Michigan Economic Development Corporation to provide a small-business "czar" and a manufacturing "czar" with the experience and vision to focus on small-business start-ups as well as retaining and creating manufacturing jobs.
- Implement a Forestry Initiative that would adopt forest management changes to protect the environment and create new job opportunities by strengthening Michigan's timber industry.

The Senate has teamed up with the House of Representatives to make this plan a success.

Legislation inspired by the plan is already scheduled for introduction this week.

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